

Producers want small fixes to improve Colorado's Cottage Food Law

Colorado's Cottage Food Law gives small-scale local growers and producers the ability to sell specially labeled homemade nonhazardous foods, such as baked goods, jams, honey and dehydrated produce.

Before the Cottage Food Law was signed into law in March 2012, producers could not sell homemade products; they had to rent time for production at expensive commercial kitchens.

After nearly a year, the Cottage Food Law is working. Farmers and small producers across the state are generating income from value-added products. Consumers have access to a wide variety of homemade goods direct from their community.

We have identified some ways to make the Cottage Law even better for producers.

HB13-1158 amends the Cottage Food Law to make these fixes.

Widely available safe food handling courses do not provide the certification spelled out in the law.

The law now requires producers be "certified in safe food handling and processing." In practice, the widely available county and local safe food handling courses are suitable and sufficient to meet the requirement; however, the courses and agencies do not provide certification.

HB13-1158 removes the language requiring certification but maintains the requirements that producers "take a food safety and sanitation course offered by a third-party comparable to and including classes given by a CSU extension service or a state, county, or district public health agency." This change will provide clarification to both producers and agencies about the safe food handling course requirement.

The required food labels are redundant.

The labels are thorough: among the contents and a food allergy disclaimer, it also requires name, address, phone and email. For a variety of security and personal reasons, some producers do not want to include a personal cell number when a landline is not available; others do not have email access.

HB13-1158 amends the label requirement to allow producers to provide either phone number or email address, as well as all of the other required information.

Who can sell our bread at the Farmer's Market?



"I'm so thankful that SB 12-048 allowed me to start my bakery business. HB 13-1158 will provide the needed clarifications and allow my business to grow and prosper."

*-Monica Wiitanen
Small Potatoes Farm, Paonia*



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